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RECENT BOOKS IN AMERICAN HISTORY

WEBSTER COOK

Principal of the High School, Saginaw, Michigan

To look after the needs of the teachers is quite as legitimate a purpose in building up a high-school library as to provide for the needs of the pupils, and so it becomes an essential part of the library equipment to have on hand, available for the teacher's use, as broad a collection as possible of the source material of the branch of history to be taught. Such collections should be made in every high-school library. As most of the cities have growing public libraries, some of the money now wasted on worthless and ephemeral fiction and worse than worthless juveniles, might profitably be turned to books of this kind, which would be of permanent value.

This happens to be a very good time to speak of gathering books of this character, as just at present there is great activity in reprinting, or in hunting out and printing for the first time, material that has not hitherto been easily accessible to students. One important series of this kind is "Original Narratives of Early American History," published by Chas. Scribner's Sons. The series is under the general editorship of Professor J. Franklin Jameson, and is published under the auspices of the American Historical Association, thus insuring careful selection and editing. It is impossible here to speak in any detail of these volumes. The first one deals with the Northmen, Columbus, and Cabot, and contains material of the very highest value. Its one great defect from our present point of view is its lack of completeness. A number of things are omitted that ought to have been included. Vol. III of the series has preceded Vol. II. It is entitled *Early English and French Voyagers, Chiefly from Hakluyt*, and contains the narratives of Cartier, Hore, Hawkins, Drake, Gilbert, Barlowe, Lane, White, Brereton, Priny, Waymouth, and a "Voyage to Sagadahoc." Purchas and Hakluyt were republished a few years ago, but in limited edi-

tions at very high prices. This volume at a reasonable price is therefore welcome, but again it is unfortunate that more is not included. For valuable as these volumes are, their lack of completeness makes a serious drawback in their use by students.

Another valuable series which has now reached its twenty-ninth volume is entitled "Early Western Travels," and is published by Arthur H. Clark and Co., of Cleveland. All the volumes of this series have so far been carefully edited, but not all are of equal value for our purposes. Again we cannot deal in detail with even the volumes of recent publication, but one, Vol. XXV in the series, *The Present State of European Settlements on the Mississippi*, by Captain Wm. Pitman (1763-70) gives us information about the Mississippi posts and settlements from New Orleans to St. Louis at a period when information about them is very hard to find, and is the most valuable of the five or six volumes published in the series this year. Other recent volumes are: *Personal Narrative of Travels in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky, and of a Residence in the Illinois Country*, by Elias Pym Fordham (1812-18), Audubon's *Western Journal* (1849-50), an account of a trip from Brazos, Texas, to southern California, by the son of the great naturalist, and *Travels in the Great Western Prairies, the Anahuac and Rocky Mountains and in the Oregon Territory*, by Thomas J. Farnham, a narrative rich in the early history of Oregon.

But the most important of the original documents to which I wish to call attention are two publications by Congress; and first the *Journal of the Continental Congress*. The *Journal* is to be published in eleven volumes. The fourth is now announced. The editorial work is satisfactorily done by Worthington C. Ford, and the *Journal* is supplemented by reports and other documents selected from the papers of the Continental Congress now in the Congressional Library. This is thus the most complete and valuable edition of the *Journal* ever issued. It can be purchased for \$1 a volume, and I cannot emphasize too strongly the statement that this edition should find its way into every high-school library.

The second congressional publication is a work of scarcely less importance and of even greater interest. In 1815 Congress purchased from Thomas Jefferson a collection of documents for which it paid him nearly \$24,000. In 1826, when Jefferson's library was sold at auction, another collection was purchased for the Congressional Library. Among the papers thus obtained were copies of the *Court Books and Records of the Virginia Company*, covering the period from 1619 to 1623. Ever since that these valuable records and papers have been in the Congressional Library and until now no copy of them has ever been published, although Congress had many times been urged to make proper provision for their publication. But now, in two magnificent volumes under the title of *Records of the Virginia Company of London: The Court Book*, Vols. I and II, are published and there seems to be some intimation that the other valuable papers of the Virginia Company will also soon be put in print, and constitute a third volume. The preface to this edition is written by Professor Herbert L. Osgood, of Columbia University, and the edition is ably edited by Miss Susan M. Kingsbury, of Simmons College. Says Miss Kingsbury:

The value of this series of papers, is threefold—it discloses the organization and activity of the company; it aids in an understanding of the various problems, policies, and conditions of the state under the early Stuarts; and it is of great importance in a study of the entire movement of the earlier and of the later century for exploration, for trade, and especially for colonization.

Between the years 1618 and 1624 Virginia changed from a "colony for exploitation to a colony for settlement." Its land system was developed; its various classes of population were established or begun; and thus the foundations were laid for the future character of the colony. The conditions during this period need more careful study than they have yet received, or, so long as their records and papers remained unpublished, than was really possible for most students. The bringing of these important papers and records within easy reach of all is therefore a matter for greatest congratulation.

Two abstracts of the *Records of the Virginia Company* have

hitherto been published, one by Neil, which was not very accurate, and a briefer one in the volumes of the Virginia Historical Society, both inadequate for any careful study. The two volumes now published are sold for \$4, and again I have no hesitancy in saying every high-school library should obtain them.

Another book, also containing much of value to the teacher, is *Documentary History of Reconstruction*, by Walter L. Fleming; published by the Arthur H. Clark Company, Cleveland.

The purpose of this work is to make more accessible to the student and to the general reader some of the original sources relating to the Reconstruction period [is the first sentence of the Preface.] The documents presented are principally laws, state and federal, official reports and political platforms; accounts of northern men and foreigners living or traveling in the South; accounts of southerners, white and black, ex-Confederates and Unionists, Conservatives and Radicals.

There are to be two volumes of this collection of documents, but Vol. I only has come to hand. A detailed criticism is not possible here, but perhaps too much should not be expected from a work of this kind. The selections given afford many glimpses of conditions in the South during the reconstruction period; many of the selections are exceedingly interesting and instructive; but they give glimpses only. For a real study much more is necessary than is or could be given in the two volumes to which the selections are limited. While we have not here then a real History of Reconstruction, yet, if we do not mistake its real character, the work is a valuable and instructive one.

Next to these various works in original material, perhaps one or two monographs on important subjects are worthy of mention. One such work is *The Disputed Presidential Election of 1876*, by Paul Leland Haworth, published by Burrows Bros. Co., Cleveland. This is an exceedingly careful and painstaking study of a very complicated affair, is accurate, and well written. All the disputed questions are discussed, and the evidence on both sides is fairly stated. It is, in fact, the best account of this serious dispute now available. Nevertheless the work must be used with some care, as Mr. Haworth is a republican, and in his

final conclusion in the discussion of every dispute he uniformly finds the republicans in the right and the democrats wrong.

Another work, also published by the Burrows Bros. Co., is the *Purchase of Florida*, by Herbert Bruce Fuller. This essay, the author tells us, was awarded the Eggleston Prize in American History at Yale University in 1904, and from the poverty of historical writings on the subject he says that he "was impressed with the advantages which might accrue to students of American history, from an unprejudiced and accurate account of the acquisition of Florida and our early entanglements with the Spanish nation." All will agree with this view of the situation and we are therefore prepared to welcome a work devoted to the consideration of this neglected phase of our history. And so in Mr. Fuller's pages we find much material not so easily accessible elsewhere—indeed a great deal of such material, if we are in position to use it. But unfortunately the book has a serious and almost fatal defect. His treatment is not full enough; he has not given a clear account of the complicated conditions with which he deals. One must already be quite familiar with the whole history of the period to understand the significance of what he finds here, or to be able to follow clearly the progress of the narrative.

In conclusion, two general works may perhaps receive passing notice. One is the series of volumes under the head of "The American Nation" edited by Albert Bushnell Hart, and published by Harper and Brothers. The publication of this series has now been progressing for several years. It is not a continuous narrative history, but rather a series of monographs, each by a different author, each treating one phase or period of the history. Vols. VIII to XIV have appeared since the last report. It is impossible even to mention the volumes in detail, but the last one brings the history down to 1829. Such a series has some advantages over a work by a single author, and also serious disadvantages. The chief ones for our purposes are that the volumes are very uneven, and the point of view of the successive authors is constantly changing. For teachers the first of these defects is the important one, for high-school pupils

the second one. Some of the volumes add materially to our insight into the period treated; others add little or nothing to what had already been written. Nevertheless, taken as a whole, the work is important enough to merit our serious consideration.

The final work to which a word may be given is the completion of Rhodes's *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850* (Macmillan), by the publication of Vols. VI and VII. In almost his concluding paragraph Mr. Rhodes himself says, "I have endeavored throughout this history of the great conflict, to which I have devoted nineteen years of my life, to maintain such standards of research and of judgment as should elicit the utmost of truth." To this modest claim of the author all familiar with the work can more than subscribe. With practically unlimited means at his command, Mr. Rhodes's research has been prodigious, and so his materials, as he says, superabundant. He has given us a readable and reliable history, accurate and impartial. His one great limitation is that he has not penetrated deeply into the great underlying forces at work in our history, and his judgments therefore are not always profound or such as will stand the test of time. But his work nevertheless is a valuable and important one, and especially well suited for the reference library in our schools. Mr. Rhodes himself gives a sort of summary of his work at the close of his last volume:

It has covered twenty-seven years of pregnant events, the compromise on slavery devised by great statesmen; its upsetting by an ambitious Northern Senator; the formation of the Republican party; the agitation of slavery; Southern arrogance and aggression; the election of Lincoln; the refusal of the South to abide by the decision of the ballot box; the Civil War; the great work of Lincoln; the abolition of slavery; the defeat of the South; Reconstruction based upon universal Negro Suffrage; the oppression of the South by the North; the final triumph of Southern intelligence and character over the ignorance and corruption that so long had thriven under Northern misconceptions.

The importance of the history and of the period which it covers can be shown in no better way than by the mere enumeration of these topics.

Since the Hayes-Tilden campaign in 1876,

South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana have always given their electoral votes to the democratic candidates for the presidency. With their resumption of home rule, the first step in the process by which intelligence and property gained control of affairs in all of the Southern States that joined the Confederacy, my history fitly ends.

It should be remembered that a report of this kind cannot be complete or exhaustive. It is not intended, in the ordinary sense of the word, to be a review of books, but rather to call attention to some at least of the important books of the year along the lines of American history. Moreover its point of view is not that of the reviewer, but always that of the importance of these books in connection with the work of the secondary schools.